

## SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

Guelfa, whose wife Laudamia was one of her correspondents. Buonaccorso di Lapo Giovanni seems to have been her chief link with the popular side. The family of the Canigiani (kinsmen of Petrarca's mother, Eletta Canigiani) became especially devoted to her. The head of the family, Piero di Donato Canigiani, and his son, Messer Ristoro (a learned lawyer), were men of great character and personality, wealthy and influential burghers, leading spirits in the counsels of the Parte Guelfa. A younger brother of Ristoro, Barduccio di Piero Canigiani, although little more than a boy, had devoted himself to a religious life and was one of the "adopted sons" of Don Giovanni dalle Celle. Among the lower orders, a tailor, Francesco di Pippino, and his wife, Monna Agnese, were Catherine's ardent disciples. Francesco does not seem to have been by birth a Florentine, but a native of San Miniato al Tedesco, who had settled in the capital and probably become a Florentine citizen. In spite of his humble position, he was a man of some importance among all in Florence who looked for righteousness; and in later years, in his own unobtrusive way, he made his little house near the Piazza del Grano, in the quarter of Santa Croce, a centre of religious life in the city. With them were closely bound in ties of friendship a high-born couple, Bartolo Usimbardi and his wife, Monna Orsa, who likewise took Catherine as their supreme guide in the spiritual life.

Although vigorously continuing the campaign against the papal officials in Italy, the Florentines were prepared to yield to the Pope's authority in spiritual matters, and obeyed the interdict. "To-day," writes a contemporary,<sup>ec</sup> on the eleventh day of May, 1376, they left off singing the Mass in the city and contado of Florence, and no longer celebrated the Body of Christ to us, citizens and contadini. But we see Him with our hearts, and God knoweth that we are not Saracens nor pagans, but are and shall remain true Christians, the elect of God."<sup>1</sup> Another tells us how a passion of devotion swept over the citizens, who found themselves thus for secular reasons deprived <sup>1</sup>

*Dar' to d' Anonlmo Florentine*, p. 308. 172